BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS

Service BC
Ministry of Management Services

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca *Issue: 05-16* *April 22, 2005*

- **Inflation rate remains stable in March, at 2.1%**
- **Retail sales up 2.9%; wholesale sales and new vehicle sales recover in February**
- **Visitor entries bounce back in February**

Prices

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate remained stable in March, at 2.1%.** Energy costs (+8.1%) continued to be a significant source of inflationary pressure in the economy, accounting for 0.5 percentage points of the total increase in the consumer price index (CPI) over the last year. Consumers paid nearly a third more for fuel oil (+29.7%), and prices at the pump (+10.2%) remained high. Fares for urban transit (+5.2%) and intercity travel (+6.5%) were up significantly from March 2004, as were auto insurance premiums (+7.5%).

  Shelter costs (+2.6%) continued to reflect the effect of increased insurance (+11.1%) and property taxes (+3.7%), together with rising utility costs (+6.1%). With the exception of health & personal care products & services (+2.4%), consumers faced more modest increases for most other commodities. The cost of groceries fell 0.2%, as lower prices for fruits, vegetables, seafood, coffee and tea offset increases for other food products. However, consumers paid 2.5% more for restaurant meals than they did a year earlier. Alcohol & tobacco prices were up 0.7%.

  Prices for clothing & footwear (+1.9%) continued to rise in March, but household operations & furnishings were less expensive (-0.3%). The index for recreation, education & reading materials was up 1.5%, largely due to the effect of tuition fees, which rose 13.0% at the beginning of the school year. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **British Columbia's inflation rate in March was slightly lower than the national average (+2.3%).** Nationally, energy (+9.5%), tobacco (+4.7%) and food (+2.8%) contributed to upward movement in the overall price level. Alberta (+1.8%), NWT (+1.7%) and Yukon (+1.9%) were the only regions where consumers faced smaller increases in the overall price level. Vancouver's inflation rate was 2.1% in March, while prices increased 2.5% in Victoria.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Economy

- **Sales by retailers in the province increased 2.9% (*seasonally adjusted*) in February, marking the first time in four months that sales have advanced.** Retailers of home electronics and appliances, as well as home centres and hardware stores posted solid growth in February. Higher prices at the pump helped boost the value of sales at gas stations, and car dealers, especially those selling used vehicles and RVs, made gains. However, supermarket sales remained weak, and department stores slipped back after sales soared in January.

  Nationally, sales were up 1.7% in February, as the total tally from cash registers surpassed the $30 billion mark for the first time ever. While all provinces posted gains, retailers in Ontario (+0.8%) and Quebec (+1.0%) saw only modest increases. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

- **Wholesale sales bounced back in February, rising 3.6% (*seasonally adjusted*) after slipping (-2.5%) at the beginning of the year.** Wholesalers of machinery & equipment, building supplies and metal products posted solid gains, but lumber & millwork and computer wholesalers did not fare as well. Nationally, wholesale sales advanced 1.1% in February despite an ongoing slump in Ontario (-0.6%).

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **The number of new vehicles driven off car lots in the province surged ahead 11.7% (*seasonally adjusted*) in February after stalling (-11.0%) in the previous month.** Dealerships across the country were active in February, with sales increasing more than ten percent in

Did you know...
A tenth of Canadian taxfilers provided 53% of the federal government's total revenues from personal income taxes in 2002. That's up from 46% in 1990.

all but two provinces (Quebec (+6.2%) and Alberta (+8.9%)). Canadian sales climbed 12.8%.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Tourism

- **Visitor entries to Canada via British Columbia bounced back in February, rising 5.0% (*seasonally adjusted*) after posting a similar decline (-5.2%) in the previous month.** The number of visitors from both the US (+5.0%) and overseas (+4.8%) rebounded from a downturn at the beginning of the year. Total Canadian entries were up 1.2%.

  More Canadians returned to BC from trips south of the border (+3.2%). Same-day car trips to the US increased 5.8%. However, re-entries from trips overseas slipped (-0.8%).

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

Children and Crime

- **A fifth of all violent crimes reported to 122 Canadian police services (services which represented 61% of reported crimes) in 2003 involved victims that were aged 17 and under.** These crimes included sexual and physical assaults, as well as other incidents such as robbery, uttering threats and extortion.

  Young children are most likely to be harmed by family members: 63% of physical assaults against children aged six and under were committed by family members, usually parents. As children got older, they were more likely to be assaulted by a peer or a stranger. Over half of teenage victims between 14 and 17 were assaulted by a close friend, acquaintance or coworker, and one in five were assaulted by a stranger. For teenagers, 16% of physical assaults were committed by family members

  Among those aged 11 to 17, nearly a third of the assaults occurred on a street, parking lot, or in an open area. A quarter of those aged 11-13, and a fifth of 14-17-year-olds, were assaulted at school. Less than a third of the incidents occurred in the home. *Data Source: SC, The Daily*

- **Infants are more likely to be murdered than are older children.** From 1998 to 2003, the average homicide rate for infants under the age of one was 25 for every million people. This was double the second-highest rate (14) for males aged 14 to 17. The third-highest rate (10) was for girls aged 1 to 5. A total of 401 children and youth (under 17) were victims of homicide during this six year period, and two-thirds of the 350 solved cases were committed by a family member. *Data Source: SC, The Daily*

E-commerce

- **Online sales by Canadian companies and government departments grew substantially for the fifth consecutive year in 2004.** Sales increased 49.7% to $28.3 billion, with the bulk of sales ($26.4 billion, up 45.5%) made by private companies. Despite the strong growth, e-commerce still accounted for less than 1% of total operating revenues for private businesses.

  E-commerce remains largely the domain of big companies: only 7% of private firms engaged in e-commerce last year, but these companies accounted for 27% of gross business income in Canada. Almost three-quarters of the firms used broadband Internet access, up from less than half in 2001.

  Wholesalers sold over $6 billion worth of goods online last year, with transportation & warehousing companies accounting for $4.6 billion of sales.

  Many Internet sales are transactions between companies–business to business sales account for about 75% of total private sector e-commerce. However, small firms are more likely to sell to consumers than are larger enterprises. Firms with fewer than 20 employees reported that 41% of the value of their online sales was to households.

The Nation

- **Canada's composite leading indicator advanced 0.2% (*seasonally adjusted*) in March, as it continued to recover after stalling in November.** The manufacturing sector led the advance, with new orders of durables up 2.8%. Financial indicators were also strong, as were sales of furniture and appliances. However, the demand for labour remained weak.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline Report

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Contact: Paul Gosh (250) 387-9221
Originally published in *Business Indicators*, Issue 05-03. Annual Subscription $60 +GST

Researching Your Business
Information resources guide to business planning

Why a business plan?

Success in today's complex economy requires a solid foundation of knowledge from which sound business decisions c0an be made. For most people considering or involved in creating a new business venture, this foundation is built from a formal business plan. Even if you believe your business does not require a formal plan, most business experts highly recommend that you conduct at least some preliminary research prior to committing yourself legally or financially to your business enterprise.

The strategic value of a business plan is derived from the information you collect and the knowledge you acquire during this process. That is, the exercise of preparing a business plan is critical in helping you gain an understanding of how your business venture will operate in the marketplace. Financial lenders and other potential investors and advisors will use your business plan as a tool to assess their level of support for your enterprise. As such, it is important to ensure your plan is as complete, reliable and timely as possible.

Although it may seem an intimidating or even an impossible task at first, a plan that does not capture the most relevant and appropriate data for your venture will only serve to undermine your efforts. This is not to say, however, that there will always be the kind of information available that your business plan requires, just that an effective business plan will make the best use of what is available at the time your plan is prepared. At present, there are a number of organizations, both government sponsored and private, operating in BC, who are prepared to assist you in the creation of your business.

The role of BC STATS

BC STATS is the statistical agency for the Province of British Columbia. We are a service-driven organization providing timely and reliable statistical information and analysis to provincial government departments on the economic, social and demographic conditions of the province and its people. Often this output can serve a wider audience and purpose. Our broad client group also includes Crown corporations, public agencies, the business community, investors, media, the public and students. We have developed various information products and services to 'fill in' gaps and extend resources developed by others. Sometimes this means creating the missing bits but it may be no more than reorganizing or associating existing items on a web site. While we are not in the business of preparing or instructing people on how to create a business plan, our data services staff are available to assist people in their search for data sources. This document is intended as a tool to help guide you to the relevant sources and kinds of data that are available through BC Stats and other agencies as you research and prepare for your new business venture.

What kind of information to look for

Your business plan is designed for two purposes: first, to demonstrate the feasibility of your business venture, and second, to serve as a strategic planning tool for your current and future business development. It ultimately must answer the following question: is there or will there be sufficient demand for the product or service you will supply? Your research must demonstrate support for your belief there is a share for you in the marketplace.

It is important for you to gain an understanding of the general economic conditions that will affect your chosen business. This will require an examination of the **industry** your product or service falls into, and the **market** you will access.

All business within the general economy is described within at least one industry sector. Once you have determined your sector you can undertake **sector analysis**. This will provide information ranging from the **performance** of this sector within the overall economy, as well as information on the kinds of **products/services** that are **extracted, manufactured, imported/exported, etc.** You can also research current industry **conditions**, including overall **market analysis, forecasts** and **growth trends**. This kind of information will give you a broad understanding of how your business may fit into the economy in general over time. It can also give you a sense of how developed or populated the business market might be that you are preparing to enter.

Once you have gained a general understanding it is time to focus more specifically on your market. This will include both **business** and **clients**. The business market you need to research includes business **competitors** and **suppliers**. You will need to know who your competitors are, their location, and their current **market share**. This will require information on their customer size, number of employees, the products they produce, their profitability, etc. You will need to know who your suppliers are, their location, how long they have been established, their distribution and other operating methods. An understanding of the business market will allow you to gain some perspective on how your business may or should develop, and how to manipulate the existing market to your best advantage.

The most critical information you will require concerns the potential clients of your business. You will need to know **who** they are, **where** they are located, **what** they buy, and **why** they might utilize your products/services. To find who they are requires **demographic** (population counts, age/sex breakdown, languages, etc.) and **socio-economic** information (employment levels, income, occupation, education). You will want to know where these prospective clients live, work, and play, and what they buy now or have bought in the past. Finally, you need to research **consumer characteristics** such as spending habits, and other consumer profile data to help you understand why they might want your product. With this information you will be able to develop a more precise picture of the target market you need to attract to support your business. Note that the clients for some businesses are not final consumers but other businesses.

Where to find information

There are many federal and provincial programs available to help you establish commercial ventures at home or abroad. Some agencies, such as Business Development Canada, and the Canada-BC Business Service Centre, will offer active help in researching and preparing your business plan. Many agencies offer extensive information through their internet web sites (Industry Canada, Human Resources Development Canada) or by producing publications and maintaining libraries of information that can be accessed through inter-library loans (Canadian Tourism Commission, etc.). BC Stats maintains a reference library in Victoria as well as providing data through telephone, e-mail and web services. A table below lists some of the agencies and organizations that may contain the information you require to research your business.

You cannot reasonably expect to find your business plan written somewhere, just waiting to be unearthed. Some parts of the economy are well documented and tracked. To find these you will have to familiarize yourself with the jargon and coding schemes of statisticians and economists. However, many ideas fall outside the normal codification of the economy (or are lumped in with so many others that the information is without value for your specific need). In either case, through thoroughness or necessity, you should reach for other sources from which you can infer information.

To get started you should go to a library that contains a complete range of catalogued Statistics Canada materials. The libraries of community colleges and universities, as well as the Legislative and BC Stats libraries, are just such depository libraries. You should start with the industry classification now known as the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Note that different countries have different classification schemes and that they evolve over time. From the industry manual you will soon know if your "industry" is exclusively described by, say, a five digit industrial classification. If so, you are fortunate. If not, then your detective skills will be more seriously tested.

A number of other classification schemes may also prove important. The SGC or Standard Geographic Classification may be important to the correct use of regional data in determining your market size. You may have to appreciate the differences between Vancouver City and Greater Vancouver Regional District and other similar entities. Also note that boundary changes occur from time to time. Dig for this information. It is unlikely that it will be automatically provided in response to questions that do not probe for this sort occurrence.

In short, to correctly use the data available, you must understand how statisticians and economists divvy up the economy and the geography. And you will have to learn some of the jargon they use; the "shorthand" so that a set of standardized concepts can be taken for granted.

Organization	Location	Contact	Internet
BC Stats	Victoria	250-387-0327 bc.stats@gems8.gov.bc.ca	www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca
Statistics Canada	Ottawa		www.statcan.ca
Small Business BC	Vancouver	604-775-5525/1-800-667-2272	www.sb.gov.bc.ca
Interactive business planner			www.cbsc.org/ibp
Industry Canada		Blue pages	www.ic.gc.ca
Business Development Canada	Local	Blue pages	www.bdc.ca
Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation	Vancouver	Blue pages	www.cmhc.ca
Revenue Canada		Blue pages	www.cra-arc.gc.ca/agency/stats
Canadian Tourism Commission	Ottawa	613-954-3943	www.canadatourism.com
Government Agents Offices	Local	Blue pages	www.governmentagents.gov.bc.ca
Regional and local libraries	Local	Blue pages	
University & college libraries	Local	White pages	
Chambers of commerce	Local	White pages	
Regional economic development offices	Local	Blue pages	www.civicinfo.bc.ca
Regional district & municipal offices	Local	Blue pages	www.civicinfo.bc.ca
Trade & industry magazines & newspapers	Library	Business/reference	
Industry & trade associations		Yellow pages/Canadian Almanac	

Finally, when you actually go to look up the data for the industry and area, you are strongly advised to read the notes and appendices that may reveal important clarifications about the information. Don't assume anything.

Most commonly referenced resources

1 One of the best resources for researching a small business is the series of **Small Business Profiles** prepared by Statistics Canada and freely downloadable from Industry Canada's Strategis site. First of all we are talking about small business: the Profiles are limited to those business that reported between $30,000 and $5 million in annual revenue. Many thousands of business tax returns are sampled and analyzed. Within each industry and province the firms are ranked by their revenues and further grouped into **quartiles** for which the top and bottom revenue limits are published. Quartiles is just a concise way of saying that a quarter of the firms are in each group: the top grossing 25% of the sample, the next 25% and so on. Within each quartile the data are aggregated so that information is provided for the group—not individual firms. For each of the quartiles the Profiles publish a selection of expense items, such as rent and advertising, as a percent of revenues. You will also find the average number of paid employees, some financial ratios (interest coverage, gross margin) and a comparison of profitable vs. non-profitable businesses in terms of total revenues and expenses. Older data sets (years) are based on the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC80) while newer years are released based on the NAICS.

➶http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/internet/inpp-pp.nsf/en/h_pm00059e.html

2 Many businesses have a customer profile that they target. Their message, products, and often their very location are chosen to increase their effectiveness in reaching the target market. Without a doubt the best source of demographic information is the **Census of Population and Housing**, which is conducted at 5 year intervals. No other survey matches its scope. Every household is included. If you can improve your business by knowing the age, sex, family structure, ethnic origin, education, occupation, income, etc. of the population in a particular area, then Census data is the way to go. At BC Stats we can generate numerous reports across any or all regions in the province. We can easily tabulate data in relation to pinpoint geographic locations—say in concentric circles from some business' address. For example, one of our customers is a financial institution that, on examining such a report, came to realize that a large number of people in its target area spoke a certain language at home. They recruited someone fluent in this language and reported great success in making inroads into this community within a community. Almost any business can benefit from this sort of knowledge.

➶www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/census.htm

3 Another area where we have positive response from the business community is for our regional profiles. BC Stats has developed a range of regional profile products: from a 28-volume series based on regional districts and their communities; to two-page summaries available freely on our site; with several 'flavours' in between. We even have a web site devoted to making regional data accessible.

➶www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/regions.htm

➶www.regionalindex.gov.bc.ca

4 Our perennial bestseller is the *British Columbia Manufacturers' Directory* (BCMD) which is published annually. It is a 600-page cross-classified directory of approximately 4,600 manufacturing firms. It is an invaluable tool if you purchase from, or sell to, manufacturing firms. Many of the firms listed are small, so there is a high level of turnover each year. As we make perhaps 2,000 revisions each year you should ensure that you always have the latest issue. We have anecdotal evidence from firms that their listing resulted in increased export sales and testimony from individuals that they found their employer through the directory. For some years now we have had the entire database on-line and searchable. We are not aware of a similar free product with the same range of

powerful filtering capabilities available anywhere else. Continuing financial support from the Ministry of Small Business and Economic Development combined with recoveries from sales of the book and the database have preserved this invaluable resource to date.

➶www.made-in-bc.ca

5 One of the most important areas for business planning is gaining a sense of consumer behaviour and the consequent potential market. Statistics Canada's **Survey of Household Spending** (SHS) goes a long way to providing a rich data set with annual provincial level spending patterns since 1997. The main print publication is catalogue number 62-202, **Spending Patterns in Canada**, but users with a specific line of inquiry are perhaps better served by contacting BC Stats or using Statistics Canada's CANSIM database and downloading results at $3 per time series. Hint: CANSIM defaults to only the latest year, but choosing all time periods (usually last line of the query) does not increase the cost and gives you the benefit of a time-series revealing changes in consumer behaviour over time.

➶www.statcan.ca/english/services/
(choose CANSIM)

Other useful sources described

Look here for an overview of various industry, product, occupational and geographic coding schemes:

➶www.statcan.ca/english/concepts/index.htm

North American Industry Classification System (Statistics Canada): Introduced in 1997 and revised in 2002, this is the current system of industry classification. This classification structure now provides the basis for most Statistics Canada industry data tabulations.

Standard Industrial Classification (Statistics Canada): A previous system of classifying companies and enterprises according to the activity in which they are engaged.

Standard Classification of Goods (Statistics Canada): A system that classifies commodities based on an eight digit harmonized commodity description and coding system. This classification identifies commodity classes for imports, exports, and manufactured goods. Critical for most product analysis.

Standard Geographic Classification (Statistics Canada): A system of names and codes representing areas in Canada. Identifies all Provinces, Regional Districts (Census Divisions), and municipalities (Census Subdivisions) in Canada. Knowing how geographic areas are structured will help you determine which area to select for your target market.

Small Business Quarterly (BC Stats): A variety of data series on small business in BC. Provides information on business counts, incorporations and bankruptcies, number of businesses by employee size, manufacturers outlook for business conditions. Includes some analysis. (Paid subscription or single issue through our WebStore.)

Business Indicators (BC Stats): A range of up-to-date economic and financial data, including production and shipments for British Columbia's major industries. Some time series and analysis. (Paid subscription or single issue through our WebStore.)

Quarterly Regional Statistics (BC Stats): Organized by region, and features current monthly and quarterly economic data. Includes charts and tables. Areas covered include British Columbia, Development Regions and Regional Districts. (Paid subscription or single issue through our WebStore.)

Census of Population & Housing (Statistics Canada): Conducted every 10 years from 1851, and every 5 years from 1956, the Census is the most comprehensive coverage of demographic and socio-economic information on Canadians. Published information is available down to the neighbourhood (Census Tract) level. Some non-standard provincial areas (i.e. Local Health

Area, School Districts, Forest Regions, etc.) available at cost from BC Stats.

- www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen01/profiles/csd_txt.htm
- www12.statcan.ca/english/profil01/PlaceSearchForm1.cfm

Socio-economic Statistical Profiles (BC Stats): Individual profiles are available for Development Regions, Regional Districts, Local Health Areas and College Regions. Includes tables and charts covering population growth, ethnic origin, migration, family structure, labour market, income, unemployment, social assistance, crime, child care, education and health. Produced once a year.

- www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/index.htm

Community Profiles (BC Stats): Contains a variety of statistical information for each Regional District & corresponding municipal areas.

- www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/pubs/pr_compr.htm

Community Facts (BC Stats): A two-page summary for regional districts and municipalities.

- www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/dd/facsheet/facsheet.htm

PCensus (Tetrad Computer Applications Inc.): Utilizing Census data, PCensus is a program that allows area profile data to be developed for non-standard geographic areas, such as polygons and radii. Available at cost through BC Stats. Useful for determining immediate market size based on a specified location.

Business Register (Statistics Canada): Records the number and distribution of business establishments based on the industrial classification in Canada and BC. Data at a sub-provincial level of detail is only available through Statistics Canada. This information is useful to gain an understanding of the number of competitors or suppliers within your selected area.

Population Projections (BC Stats): Detailed statistical tables providing historical and forecast populations by age and sex for Regional Districts, Local Health Areas, and other non-standard geography. Critical for determining present and potential future market size for years not covered by Census data. Much of the data is free on our site. The most detailed tables are available through our WebStore.

- www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/popproj.htm

Major Projects Inventory (BC Stats): Information on major capital projects, listed by development region and status (proposed, under construction, on hold, or completed) for projects costing 15 million or more.

- www.gov.bc.ca/sbed/down/major_projects_inventory.pdf

Worth considering as you search

When conducting research on any subject it is often useful to ask yourself the following question: how would the kind of information I need be collected? If you understand how something is done you will begin to understand where the information you need might be available. For instance, it is more likely a government agency will have income information than product sales since individuals and business must file income tax returns but do not need to file specific sales information other than total sales and taxes collected. Research for marketing purposes, consumer characteristics and preferences, and other more subjective personal data is, for the most part, not conducted by government ministries or agencies. The exceptions are Statistics Canada, Health Canada, and Tourism BC. Some ministries will sponsor research like this, but the information generally is used for internal purposes only.

Most statistics gathered by government agencies are done through survey and administrative files. These surveys are usually sample only, which means that not all individuals or busi-

nesses are polled. As a result, information at lower levels of geography will often be suppressed by law for respondent confidentiality requirements. Data from administrative records is usually related to financial transactions and/or other forms required of individuals and business operations by law for governments, agencies and Crown corporations. Administrative data is often confidential. Names and information on individuals and/or companies will almost never be available from government data sources. A notable exception is our Manufacturers' Directory where the information is collected solely for the purpose of dissemination.

Most libraries will keep business and market oriented data in their reference sections. Check with the Business or Reference Librarian. Local college and University libraries will carry most of Statistics Canada publications, particularly Census data.

Back issues of newspapers like the Financial Post, and the Globe and Mail, are important sources for data on businesses and industry sectors. They may also contain references to market research or other documents that may be available on the subject. Industry and trade magazines are often important sources for 'insider' information.

Sometimes the most effective and relevant market research data is done by personal survey. This means either direct or indirect contact with other businesses in the sector you are researching. Do not hesitate to visit their stores, call up business owners, talk to the wholesalers and distributors, or talk to your friends about the products or services you are thinking of offering. The kind of information gathered this way is often as indicative of the market as any other statistic.

Data dissemination activities and personnel are often the first cuts to be made by organizations faced with pressure to decrease costs. Be prepared to spend time researching for yourself at the reference centres and libraries in your area. More and more information is made available through government web sites, either federal, provincial and/or local. Many libraries will provide limited internet access to their patrons.

Many of the statistics available may seem too dated to be of use. Time lags between data collection and dissemination are an inherent product of the high level of data quality demanded by most federal and provincial agencies. Canadian statistics organizations are highly regarded throughout the world. Data that seems out of date is still the best available, and recognized as such by most people.

Some people who can help

There are many people who are more than willing to help you develop a business plan. The bottom line is, however, that the true value of a business plan is what you put into it. Use your research skills to locate information on how to write a business plan. Following are a few of the places you might get some help.

- Chartered Banks/Credit Unions
- Accountants
- Lawyers
- Business Development Canada
- Canada-BC Business Service Centre
- Chambers of Commerce/Boards of Trade
- Community Colleges/Night school courses
- Business Consultants
- Internet

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fax transmission information service from **BC STATS**

Email transmission information service from **BC STATS**

also on the Internet at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jan 1/05	% change on one year ago
BC	4,220.0	1.1
Canada	32,078.8	0.9
GDP and INCOME		
(BC - at market prices)	2003	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	145,550	5.2
GDP *($ 1997 millions)*	133,600	2.5
GDP *($ 1997 per Capita)*	32,175	1.6
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	19,758	0.3
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Feb	3,599	0.8
Merchandise Exports - Feb	2,671	0.7
Retail Sales - Feb	4,104	2.9
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		12-month avg
(all items - 1992=100)	Mar '05	% change
BC	124.1	2.2
Canada	126.5	2.1
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		
(seasonally adjusted)	Mar '05	% change on prev. month
Labour Force - BC	2,248	-0.4
Employed - BC	2,101	0.1
Unemployed - BC	147	-7.0
		Feb '05
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	6.5	7.0
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	6.9	7.0
INTEREST RATES (percent)	April 20/05	April 21/04
Prime Business Rate	4.25	3.75
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	4.90	4.45
- 5 year	6.05	6.15
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	April 20/05	April 21/04
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.2393	1.3589
US $ *(reciprocal of the closing rate)*	0.8069	0.7359
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Mar '05	one year ago
BC	698.01	3.0
Canada	695.39	2.6

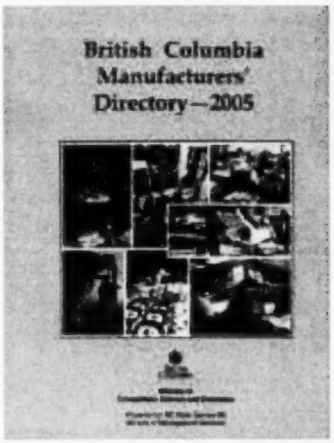
SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

2005 Manufacturers' Directory



600 pages

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- Consumer Price Index, March 2005

Next week

- Current Statistics, April 2005
- BC Business Indicators, April 2005
- Tourism Sector Monitor, April 2005

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